

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-10: (canceled).

Claim 11 (original): A method of screening for a compound that disrupts transcriptional repression of a gene, comprising the steps of:

(a) combining a Smad6/Hoxc-8 protein complex with a gene in the presence and absence of a compound, wherein said gene comprises a Hox DNA binding element; and

(b) assaying for transcription of said gene, wherein an increase in the level of transcription in the presence of said compound relative to the level of transcription in the absence of said compound is indicative of a compound that disrupts transcriptional repression of said gene.

Claim 12 (original): The method of claim 11, wherein said transcription is assayed by means selected from the group consisting of a Northern blot, a Western blot, an enzymatic assay and a chemiluminescent assay.

Claim 13 (original): The method of claim 11, wherein said gene is a reporter gene.

Claim 14 (original): The method of claim 13, wherein said reporter gene is selected from the group consisting of β -galactosidase, luciferase, secreted alkaline phosphatase and CAT assay.

Claim 15-20 (canceled)